

Laconia Is Sunk; Two American Women Die

Mrs. Hoy and Daughter, of Chicago, Lost with 18,099-Ton Cunarder

Liner from New York Torpedoed Unwarned

278 Survivors Landed—Attack May Be Overt Act Awaited by Wilson

London, Feb. 27.—A Queenstown dispatch says that Mrs. and Miss Hoy were drowned by the swamping of a boat after the Laconia was sunk without warning by a German submarine off the Irish coast Sunday night.

It is probable that Mrs. Mary E. Hoy and Miss Elizabeth Hoy, of Chicago, are the passengers referred to. They were in the first cabin.

It has been definitely ascertained that two Americans were lost on the Laconia, according to "The Daily Chronicle's" Queenstown correspondent.

TORPEDOED AT NIGHT
The Laconia, a Cunard liner, of 18,099 tons, carrying seventy-five passengers and a crew of 216, was torpedoed and sunk off the Irish coast Sunday night at 10:50 o'clock. Two hundred and seventy-eight survivors have been landed, according to Wesley Frost, American Consul at Queenstown. Twenty Americans were included in the crew, while six other Americans were cabin passengers.

Full details of the sinking are lacking, and the loss of life was unknown at a late hour last night. The Cunard company announced that in all probability there was no loss of life. Consul Frost telegraphed the American Embassy last night that some persons were known to be missing, and one was dead. His dispatch read:

"Cunarder Laconia torpedoed 10:50 Sunday night. Two hundred and seventy-eight survivors landed. Details lacking but known some missing, one dead."

AWAIT WILSON'S ACTION

In some quarters here it is stated authentically that the Laconia was torpedoed without warning. The question being asked on every hand is, will President Wilson consider the Laconia sinking an overt act. Although it is not definitely known that any American lives were lost, it is certain that they were placed in jeopardy. Under the terms of the Sussex note President Wilson insisted that American lives were not to be endangered with the same emphasis he gave to actual loss of life.

Reports so far show that the survivors have undergone great hardships and distress, and that many of them would have been drowned except for the prompt rescue work of a British ship. Dispatches from Queenstown state that preparations are being rushed there to treat hospital cases, so it is thought here that several of the survivors have suffered severely from exposure.

EMBASSY MAIL LOST
The Laconia carried five bags of mail for the American Embassy here and a large amount of private mail from America. All of it has been lost, according to advices from the survivors. This loss will cause serious inconvenience in many quarters.

The Laconia was one of the largest passenger ships sunk by a submarine since the war began, and it was the largest prize the U-boats have claimed since the beginning of the "sink-at-sight" campaign on February 1.

Washington Officials Call Sinking Illegal Assault On Peaceful Americans
Washington, Feb. 26.—The sinking of the big Cunarder Laconia, apparently without warning and with twenty-seven Americans on board, loomed up to-night as the most serious disaster since the beginning of the war.



PHARISEE OR GOOD SAMARITAN?



guard of American rights since the ruthless German submarine campaign began. Government officials here made no attempt to conceal their concern.

Consul Frost at Queenstown reported to the State Department the sinking of the vessel and the loss of one life, but up to late to-night had not been able to furnish details from survivors as to whether it was an American who met death. He expected to obtain full information from the 267 survivors due at Queenstown at 11:30 o'clock to-night.

Officials pointed out that while final reports may show that no American lives were lost, the fact will remain that the twenty-seven Americans on board were illegally assaulted on a peaceful mission and escaped death only by good fortune.

The United States is concerned in the sinking of the Laconia also, because a large amount of official diplomatic mail had been entrusted to her after the American liner St. Louis had cancelled its sailings. The State Department, after having had its mail held on the St. Louis for three weeks, had transferred it to the Laconia when it was definitely announced that the St. Louis would not sail until it secured guns.

In the absence of full official information, expected hourly from Consul Frost, no official would venture an opinion on the outcome of the sinking beyond saying that it would gravely complicate the already critical situation with Germany. It may prove to be the expected "overt act."

Tie-Up of U. S. Ships Forced Hoy to Risk Lives on the Laconia

Prominent Chicagoans Feared U-Boats and Planned to Travel Only on American Vessel

Chicago, Feb. 26.—Mrs. Albert H. Hoy and her daughter, Elizabeth, were returning to England to join Dr. Hoy and their son, Austin, London representative of the Sullivan Machinery Company. Dr. and Mrs. Hoy were prominent in North Side social circles for many years and lived at 461 North State Street. Mrs. Hoy was formerly Miss May Young, of this city.

Warned of the danger from submarines, Mrs. Hoy had planned to travel only on an American ship, and her Chicago friends were surprised when news dispatches the day after the Laconia's departure listed her name and that of her daughter among the Cunard liner's passengers. It is believed among their friends here that the tie-up of American ships forced them to take the risk of travelling on a British liner.

Great Loan Spurs Britain As Her Armies Push On

Nation Thrilled by Capture of Kut-el-Amara, Retreat of Germans to Weaker Line and Size of War Offering

By ARTHUR S. DRAPER
(By Cable to The Tribune)
London, Feb. 26.—This is a big day in Great Britain. From every quarter comes word of success. The staggering total of the war loan contributions offers a convincing reply to the question of whether the people were supporting the war. Bonar Law's announcement that \$5,000,000,000 had been collected from as many million subscribers is calculated to dishearten the Germans as much as it will hearten Britain and her allies.

The capture of Kut-el-Amara and the big advance on the Ancre without opposition fill the cup of British pride and furnish strengthening tonics to the Allied peoples, whose confidence in overcoming the enemy might perhaps have weakened through the economic stress and the great financial burdens they were called upon to bear.

Though Kut may seem to Americans to be far removed from the main military activities, and, therefore, of small consequence, it has, nevertheless, a significant bearing on the war. By steadily pressing ahead in Mesopotamia, the British have drawn great Turkish forces from other fronts. The fall of Kut now restores British prestige in the East to the place occupied before Townshend's unhappy end.

Rupprecht's Armies Now Holding Inferior Position on Ancre
(By Cable to The Tribune)
London, Feb. 26.—The British stroke on the Ancre, which has resulted in the withdrawal of the Germans from twenty-two square miles of French territory, is a happy augury of the Allied military operations in 1917. Whatever the reasons for the retirement of Prince Rupprecht's troops, whatever the developments of the future, General Gough, under the command of Haig, has won a big victory, the most important of the entire Somme and Ancre campaigns.

The possession of Serre alone is worth several new divisions to the British. Not since the beginning of trench warfare in the west has so much ground changed hands.

The operation is much more important than its immediate military advantage to British arms. It furnishes the strongest proof that Germany has decided to conduct the campaign regardless of the moral effect on the people. That means that the German General Staff, with Hindenburg at the head, will have a ridge entrenched and fortified fully as strongly as the Pozieres ridge, against which the British charged desperately for days before they could master it.

German Warships Shell Kent Towns and Raid Channel

One Destroyer Squadron Attacks British Patrol, Second Bombards Coast

London, Feb. 26.—While one British destroyer was fighting off a raiding squadron of German destroyers in the English Channel last night, a second German squadron slipped through in the darkness and bombarded the Kentish coast towns of Broadstairs and Margate. Both attacking flotillas escaped. One woman and a child were killed and two children seriously injured in the bombarded towns.

Sir Edward Carson announced in the Commons that four British torpedo boat destroyers were on patrol duty in the Channel when one of them encountered several German destroyers and a short engagement ensued. The British destroyer was not damaged though under heavy gun and torpedo fire.

The German vessels had been lost sight of, Carson said, when the attack on Broadstairs and Margate began. British light forces in the vicinity closed in on the German warships, which fled.

The following official statement was issued by Field Marshal Viscount French, commander in chief of the home forces:

"Some enemy torpedo boat destroyers approached the Kentish coast at 11:15 o'clock last night and fired a number of shells at the unfortified towns of Broadstairs and Margate. The fire was continued for about ten minutes. The material damage caused was slight. One occupied and one unoccupied house were wrecked, and about ten houses were damaged. It is regretted, however, that one woman and one child were killed and two children were seriously injured."

Express Telescoped Near Altoona, Fear Many Are Killed
Philadelphia, Feb. 27.—Two sleeping cars on the Mercantile Express, the "crack" Pittsburgh-New York train, were telescoped by a freight train on the Pennsylvania Railroad at Mount Union station, near Altoona, early today, according to information received at the general offices of the company in this city.

Railroad officials expressed fear that a number of passengers had been killed. The two sleeping cars were so tightly jammed together that little headway had been made in extricating the occupants half an hour after the accident. Relief trains bearing physicians and nurses left Altoona at 1 a. m. and should arrive at the scene very shortly. The express left Pittsburgh at 7 o'clock and was due here at 4:15 a. m.

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Wilson Tells Congress He Cannot Propose Definite Measures Yet

Republicans Oppose Blanket Bill Giving President Broader Power

Want Course Sharply Defined in Measure

Threaten Extra Session Unless He Consents to Modification

(From The Tribune Bureau)

Washington, Feb. 26.—With the Democrats trying to force through almost a literal excerpt from the President's message in the form of a bill giving the President a blanket grant of power and providing \$100,000,000, and the Republicans seeking to limit and sharply define the grant of power, only two courses seemed possible to-night. These are:

1. That the President will consent to a modification of the bill—which he virtually drafted himself—so that it will give him the power to arm or convey merchantmen. The "blanket" clause would be eliminated. This is the clause "to employ such other instrumentalities or methods as may be necessary and adequate to protect our ships and our people in their legitimate and peaceful pursuits on the seas." (The full text of the bill will be found on Page 2.)

2. That the Republicans will force an extra session by preventing the passage of the resolution and perhaps of some important supply bills.

LA FOLLETTE OPPOSES ARMING
Even in the first case allowance must be made for the possible recalcitrance of Senator La Follette and his pacifist followers. Mr. La Follette declared to-day he would talk a long time on the naval bill when it came up. He is desperately opposed to arming merchant ships, and has a resolution pending which would declare it illegal.

The sentiment for an extra session of Congress has grown enormously in both houses and in both parties in the last few days. It probably is safe to say now that a majority of Senate and House wish it. And it was pointed out by such men as Senator Borah, of Idaho (Republican), and Representative Smith, of New York (Democrat), that the new Congress could be assembled in a very few days. The extra session sentiment was increased rather than diminished by the President's speech.

The desire on the part of the Republicans for an extra session seems to be growing all the time. It was manifested to-day not only in interviews and statements, many of which are printed on another page, but in a resolution introduced in the House by Representative Fess, of Ohio. This resolution would fix the date for the convening of the next Congress as April 2. The effect of it would be to force an extra session of Congress whether the President desired it or not.

FIGHT EXPECTED IN SENATE
The real fight on the President's bill is expected in the Senate. Chairman Henry of the Flood Committee assured Chairman Fieser of the Foreign Affairs Committee that there would be no difficulty in getting a rule limiting debate so that a vote could be forced in the House if desired to-morrow night or Wednesday. The bill will then go to the Senate. The House Foreign Affairs Committee will meet to-morrow morning to consider the bill.

The probability seemed to be to-night that the Administration would yield on the "blanket" authority clause, and the entire measure would then be passed, despite the outcry of the pacifists. This is based on the known desire of the President to avoid an extra session, plus the determination of the Republicans not to surrender to the President what they regard as a virtual authorization to declare war.

The same spirit which inspired the filibuster of last week is still present, and the timidity which caused its abandonment late Saturday night has been at least moderated, if not entirely swept away, by popular support from unexpected quarters.

Salient Excerpts From the Text of Mr. Wilson's Speech

On Provocation:

Two American vessels have been sunk. The case of the Housatonic was essentially like the case of the Frye.

The case of the Law . . . disclosed a ruthlessness of method which deserves grave condemnation, but was accompanied by no circumstance which might not have been expected at any time in connection with the use of the submarine against merchantmen as the German government has used it.

The overt act which I have ventured to hope the German commanders would in fact avoid has not occurred.

Our own commerce is suffering . . . rather because so many of our ships are timidly keeping to their home ports than because American ships have been sunk.

On War:

I am not now proposing or contemplating war or any steps that need lead to it.

No course of my choosing or of theirs will lead to war.

War can come only by the wilful acts and aggressions of others.

On Duty and Means:

No one doubts what it is our duty to do.

We must defend our commerce and the lives of our people.

There may be no recourse but to armed neutrality, which we shall know how to maintain.

I request that you will authorize me to supply our merchant ships with defensive arms should that become necessary.

On Waiting:

The form in which action may become necessary cannot yet be foreseen.

You will understand why I can make no definite proposals or forecasts of action now.

On Restraint:

I believe that the people will be willing to trust me to act with restraint.

It is devoutly to be hoped that it will not be necessary to put armed forces anywhere into action. The American people do not desire it.

(The President's speech in full will be found on page 2.)

First Indictment of U-Boat Frightfulness

From the first Lusitania note, May 13, 1915:

The government of the United States, therefore, desires to call the attention of the Imperial German government with the utmost earnestness to the fact that the objection to their present method of attack against trade of their enemies lies in the practical impossibility of employing submarines in the destruction of commerce without disregarding those rules of fairness, reason, justice and humanity which all modern opinion regards as imperative. . . . American citizens act within their indisputable rights in taking their ships and in traveling wherever their legitimate business calls them upon the high seas. . . . The Imperial German government will not expect the government of the United States to omit any word or any act necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens and of safeguarding their free exercise and enjoyment.

From the second Lusitania note, June 10, 1915:

But the sinking of passenger ships involves principles of humanity which throw into the background any special circumstance of detail that may be thought to affect the cases.

From the third Lusitania note, July 24, 1915:

If a belligerent cannot retaliate against an enemy without injuring the lives of neutrals, as well as their property, humanity, as well as justice and a due regard for the dignity of neutral powers, should dictate that the practice be discontinued. . . . If persisted in, it would in such circumstances constitute an unpardonable offense against the sovereignty of the neutral nation affected. . . . Friendship itself prompts it to say to the Imperial government that repetition by the commanders of German naval vessels of acts in contravention of those rights must be regarded by the government of the United States, when they affect American citizens, as deliberately unfriendly.

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Asks at the Same Time for a Grant of Unlimited Power

Would Arm American Ships If Necessary

Thinks the Country May Have Recourse to An "Armed Neutrality"

By STEVENSON H. EVANS

Washington, Feb. 26.—When President Wilson at last appeared before Congress at 1 o'clock this afternoon he asked to be invested with a power which he admitted he already possessed and hoped not to be obliged to use, namely, the power to arm American merchantmen if necessary.

He asked also to be invested with unlimited or "blanket" authority to use "all instrumentalities" of the United States in his own discretion to meet any emergency that might arise while Congress is not in session.

Beyond this, Mr. Wilson's only definite idea was that the United States should, if forced to it, adopt a policy of "armed neutrality."

BERLIN INFORMED OF SPEECH

"Armed neutrality" does not look to war; whether it shall become war depends upon those who infringe upon the rights it seeks to protect. There is ample historical precedent for it.

Although the President, when he severed diplomatic relations with Germany, invited other neutrals to follow his lead, he has not, so far as is known, suggested that neutrals join in the armed neutrality he proposes. All foreign governments, however, have been officially advised of his address to Congress to-day and official copies have been delivered to their diplomats here. By wireless, the text was sent to Berlin.

Never has a speech of Woodrow Wilson to Congress been received with so little warmth or expression of feeling. Comparing its reception to that which was accorded his address of February 3, it is as if today's speech were water and the other wine.

ADDRESS LACKS POSITIVENESS

It seemed as if the President intended it to be so. There was an absence of positive assertion, there was no definite promise of anything, there was nothing by which it might be hoped concluded that the government of the United States was about to cease drifting. There was not a trumpet call in the whole address. Not even the galleries thrilled.

At the very outset the President sounded a note which did not please his friends or his critics, the peace-at-any-price element or those who are outspoken for the assertion of American rights. Our own commerce, he said, is suffering in apprehension, not in fact, because "so many of our ships are timidly keeping to their home ports." That the American ship owners deserve the charge of timidity is far from the unanimous opinion.

SEEKS TO BE RID OF CONGRESS

There quickly followed the assertion that it would require an unusual length of time to assemble and organize the next Congress. From which the inference quickly was taken that the President would prefer to have Congress away from Washington after it had granted him the authority he sought.

While the President was speaking the news of the torpedoing and sinking of the passenger liner Laconia, having Americans on board, was spread through the Capitol. He described the loss of the Housatonic and the Lyman M. Law, and declared that the submarine menace might presently accomplish in effect what it was meant to accomplish—the tying up of our merchant fleet. And then he said no "overt act" had occurred.

His statements that "we must defend commerce and people," and that "there may be no recourse but to armed neutrality," caused a momentary stiffening, but they were followed by, "No course of mine will lead to war."

SEE ATTEMPT TO DRUG PEOPLE

Some of the leading men in Congress looked upon the speech as an address to the American people.